

of the Peace Corps. This unique service organization continues to fulfill its mission across the globe, bringing people together, and enlightening both American volunteers and the people and communities they serve.

After President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, 51 Americans stepped forward to assume the challenge to serve.

Today, there are over 8,000 volunteers serving in over 74 countries around the world. They work in areas such as education, business development, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and agriculture. They live the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. They are both young and seasoned, but all contribute enormous skills, knowledge, compassion and commitment to help people help themselves. Over the years, Maine has contributed many volunteers to the Peace Corps. Current Maine residents now serving are:

Cassandra M. Atwood in Tonga, Michael T. Berg in Armenia, Clarissa L. Brundage in Togo, Selina H. Carter in Ecuador, Andrea D. Danielson in Gambia, Shawn C. Donohue in Mali, Greg N. Dorr in Malawi, Laura N. Dow in China, John M. Engler in Guatemala, Jeffrey E. Frank in Belize, Rebecca B. Friedrichs in Togo, Joseph P. Guglielmetti in Zambia, Benjamin C. Hatch in Mali, Clint O. Benslev in Romania, Richard E. Higgins in the Philippines, Sarah W. Holt in Ecuador, Matthew P. Krannig in Nicaragua, Jessica E. Lampron in South Africa, Karen A. Lee in Swaziland, Joshua D. Lincolns in Bolivia, David A. Ludman in Benin, Ran L. Mastropaolo in the Eastern Caribbean, Joshua R. Meservey in Zambia, Matthew A. Mowatt in Kazakhstan, Joel L. Patterson in Senegal, James Perlow in South Africa, Nancy L. Sherrill in South Africa, John W. Shryock in Bulgaria, Emily E. Silver in Tanzania, Jessica J. Sleeper in Vanuatu, Zoe J. Underhill in Ecuador, Aaron A. Weiss in Moldova, Cheney J. Wells in Costa Rica and Nicholas B. Wilson in Gambia.

I am proud that Maine, a small state in population, is making such a big difference in the world. My deep gratitude goes to these volunteers for serving their country, the Peace Corps and world peace.

#### 93RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

#### HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 2008*

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, today we commemorate one of the most tragic chapters in human history: the Armenian genocide, whose 93rd anniversary is marked today. From 1915 to 1923, officials of the Ottoman Empire carried out a systematic campaign of massacres and forced deportations of Armenians from their homeland. All told, 1.5 million innocent men, women and children were murdered in this genocide, and 500,000 became refugees and displaced persons.

And sadly, we see this pattern—of genocide—repeating itself today. It is no coincidence that on this very day of commemoration, the news from Darfur grows only worse. While the world's worst humanitarian and human rights crisis continues to unfold, the re-

game in Khartoum continues to stymie the implementation of a peacekeeping force, and the peace process has ground to a halt. From the U.N. come frightening new figures—300,000 dead and the vast majority of the region's population, 4.27 million out of 6 million, now "seriously affected" by the conflict.

Clearly, patterns repeat themselves. Which is all the more reason why, in commemorating the 20th century's first genocide, one cannot help but feel compelled to redouble our efforts to resolve the 21st century's first genocide—that of Darfur.

The Genocide Convention speaks not only of addressing genocide after it has happened—but also of preventing genocide. This day of commemoration should remind us all that we have a responsibility not only to honor the victims of genocide and their families, not only a responsibility to the past, but to the future. In the face of continuing genocide, we have a responsibility for action—not apathy.

In a July 24, 1915 cable, American Consul Leslie Davis said of the genocide of Armenians, "I do not believe there has ever been a massacre in the history of the world so general and thorough as that which is now being perpetrated in this region or that a more fiendish, diabolical scheme has ever been conceived by the mind of man." Today, those words strike us not only as tragic—but as outdated. The troubled 20th century showed us, again and again and again, that the mind of man is more than capable of such diabolical schemes.

Today, burdened by the memory of those crimes, we remember and rededicate. Today we return to the origin of genocide, and we honor the dead. Let us find in their memory not only grief, but new resolution—to speedily end today's atrocities, to prevent those of tomorrow, and to punish all those who would attempt or carry out evil on such a scale.

#### TRIBUTE TO ERNEST LEROY PETERSON

#### HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 2008*

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the patriotic public service and self sacrifice of Ernest LeRoy Peterson.

Ernest LeRoy Peterson was born on December 28, 1920, in Albert Lea, Minnesota, to Oscar and Nora Peterson. He was the second eldest son of eight children. As a child, he moved to the eastern plains of Colorado, where his family was involved in farming.

In August 1942, he was drafted into the 531st Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion, 30th Army Division, as a private. He completed basic training at Ft. Bliss, Texas and then advanced combat training at Camp Coxcomb, California. He later advanced to the rank of sergeant and section chief of Squad 13, Eighth Gun Crew.

On February 12, 1944, his battalion sailed out of Boston Harbor aboard the RMS *Empress of Australia*, bound for England. The ship, one of the largest transport vessels, held 6,800 troops. Ernie's bunk was in the swimming pool due to the lack of space. After 10 days on the high seas, the unit debarked at the bomb-scarred city of Liverpool.

On June 4, 1944, General Eisenhower spoke to Ernest and thousands of other troops over a loud speaker telling them an invasion of France would begin on June 6 and said, "Soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied expeditionary force, you are about to embark upon the great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. . . . I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory! Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking."

Ernest landed on Omaha Beach with the 531st on June 15th, nine days after D-day. Facing fierce battles along the way, Ernest's division first encountered the Germans at Isigny, France. During his march to Germany, Ernest participated in the Battle of the Bulge, which started on December 16, 1944. Three powerful German armies with over 500,000 men plunged into the heavily forested Ardennes region of eastern Belgium and northern Luxembourg. The Americans were able to stop them at Malmedy.

Ernest dug in his defensive position at Malmedy not more than 100 yards from where 86 American prisoners had been massacred by the Germans the day before. For 5 days in a row his unit was under air attack in Malmedy by Americans who thought the city had fallen to the Germans. Ernest eventually marched into Germany and met up with Russian soldiers on April 17, 1945.

Ernest's unit also went to Buchenwald concentration camp. They found piles of human bones and piles of eyeglasses five feet tall, as well as lamp shades made out of human skin. The prisoners that remained were skin and bone. Ernest did occupational duty as a guard at a prison in St. Marc, France, before returning to the United States. He received an honorable discharge from the Army on November 14, 1945.

For his service to this Nation, Ernest was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the Honorable Service Lapel Button, the Sharpshooter Badge and Rifle Bar and the Marksman Badge and Submachine Gun Bar. He was also awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French for volunteering to go on a special mission to push the Germans back across the Rhine River as well as the Fourragère of Belgium for his part in the liberation of Belgium.

On April 13, 2008, Ernest LeRoy Peterson passed away at the age of 87. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Charlotte, his two children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Mr. Peterson and other men and women who have given so much for our freedom. Like so many other members of the "Greatest Generation," I urge my colleagues to join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation for the patriotic service of Mr. Ernest LeRoy Peterson.